



NEWS



January 2005

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SLIS EMPLOYMENT SURVEY: CLASS OF 2003

This past year the School conducted its 16th annual employment survey of graduates of the Master of Library and Information Studies program at the University of Alberta. In 2003, 40 students graduated with MLIS degrees, 28 of whom are represented in this survey (70%). The 2003 survey was conducted in July and August 2004, just over a year after spring convocation.

Summary

Almost all of the 2003 graduates responding to the survey said they had been employed in library and information studies at some point since graduation, echoing high placement rates during the past decade or so, on the order of 75% to 100%. Almost all of the 2003 graduates obtained their first position within three months of graduation, similar to 2002. The most common ways in which 2003 graduates learned about their positions echoed earlier years – word-of-mouth, the SLIS job board, and various websites and listservs.

The median salary reported by 2003 graduates with full-time positions was \$43,900, an increase of \$2,900 over the previous year. The range was \$32,000 to \$62,000 per year. The most frequent employers of 2003 graduates were post-secondary libraries, public and regional libraries, and special libraries.

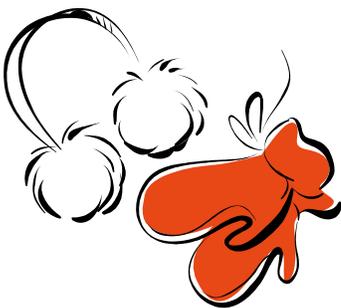
Similar to the previous year, 61% of the 2003 graduates remained in Edmonton, with several more finding positions in Calgary and elsewhere in Alberta. Unlike earlier years when an average of 18% of new graduates found work in the United States, no one in the 2003 survey went there.

Some employment indicators bear further watching in coming years. It appears as if 2000 and 2001 were exceptional years, and the 2002 and 2003 figures resemble more closely the employment patterns of the 1990s. One survey indicator to bear in mind is the number of full-time permanent placements. In 2003, only 58% of full-time placements were permanent, similar to the previous year (54%) but contrasting with 71% in 2001 and 76% in 2000. Another employment indicator is the number of graduates holding temporary positions at some point since graduation – in 2003 it was just over half, with most of those reporting two or more temporary placements, some as many as four. A third important indicator is the number of graduates, working or not, who are looking for better job prospects. More than half of the 2003 graduates said they were still seeking more satisfactory employment at the time of the survey, in contrast to the year before when only 29% were in that situation; in 2001 and 2000 the rates were lower, 25% and 14% respectively.

Placement

Of the 28 graduates represented in the 2003 survey, 26 or 93% had been employed in library and information services at some time since graduation. In the previous graduating class, all respondents had worked since graduation. More important as an employment indicator are the types of positions held. Of the 24 graduates in 2003 reporting placement details, 19 were full time and 5 part time, but only 11 of the full-time placements were permanent (58%). This was similar to 2002 when 54% of the full-time placements were permanent, but contrasts with 71% in 2001 and 76% in 2000.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Professional Development Day: Friday, February 11, 2005; 8:30 a.m., Extension Centre. Details on page 3.**
- **LISAA's Annual General Meeting takes place in May. Look for the time, date and location in your next edition of LISAA News!**



PROFILE: CAMERON HOFFMAN

Editor's note: The original recipient of the LISAA Entering Student Scholarship was unable to continue the SLIS program due to personal circumstances. Therefore, we would like to introduce you to the new recipient, Cameron Hoffman.

“Japan may sound exotic (and the sushi is excellent) and reporting may sound interesting (and sometimes you meet famous people) but I can honestly say that the library has been the most vibrant and intellectually engaging of work environments.”

First of all, I'd like to send a grateful thank-you to LISAA for choosing me for the Entering Student Scholarship! Since I made the decision to switch careers and do my MLIS, I've received an incredible amount of support and friendship from the Edmonton library community. To me, the LISAA scholarship is a great example of that support.

As I say, I've switched careers. I was a teacher, teaching ESL and English Language Arts both in the Edmonton area and in Japan (where I lived for two years and was a cardholder with the Takinogawa Public Library in north Tokyo). I also worked briefly as a newspaper reporter. I spent a year at journalism school in Regina and wrote for the *Regina Leader-Post*. This means that I have had my feet stepped on numerous times in Legislature scrums as reporters tried to get that perfect sound-bite off former Premier Romanow. And, yes, I had a Regina Public Library card.

Now I have an Edmonton Public Library card and when you check my card status with SIRSI you will see that it says STAFF. This is because I work at EPL Milner, on the 2nd floor Reference Desk. I love my job. Japan may sound exotic (and the sushi is excellent) and reporting may sound interesting (and sometimes you meet famous people) but I can honestly say that the library has been the most vibrant and intellectually engaging of work environments. Here I can teach, here I can explore ideas and my colleagues truly believe that information is valuable and should be available to all. But you all knew that.

Again, I say thank you to LISAA for honoring me with the Entering Student Scholarship, and I look forward to working with LISAA and in the library community with all of you.

Cameron Hoffman

SLIS SCHOLARSHIP UPDATE

H.W. WILSON Scholarship, Canadian Library Association

Kenneth Gariepy

Value: \$2000

Awarded to an entering MLIS student on the basis of academic standing and financial need.

JEAN THORUNN LAW Scholarship, Manitoba Library Association

Joycelyn Jaca

Value: \$1500

Awarded annually to a student entering or enrolled in a full-time MLIS program who has 12 months library experience.

LIBRARY AND INFORMATION STUDIES ALUMNI ASSOCIATION Scholarship

**CJ de Jong
Cameron Hoffman**

Value: \$1500

Recognizes outstanding academic performance and professional potential of one student entering and one student continuing in the MLIS program.

LIBRARY ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA Scholarship

Kenneth Gariepy

Value: \$1500

Awarded for academic achievement to a full-time entering or continuing MLIS student.

NATIONAL ABORIGINAL ACHIEVEMENT FOUNDATION Scholarship Program

Kenneth Gariepy

Value: \$2500

Assists Aboriginal students in financial need who are pursuing education and professional development.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY 2005

The Professional Development Day Committee of the School of Library and Information Studies at the University of Alberta is pleased to announce our 19th annual Professional Development Day. This year's event will be held on **Friday, February 11, 2005, with registration starting at 8:30 am**. The venue for this event is the **University of Alberta Extension Centre at 8303 – 112th Street, room 3-40**.

The theme of this year's conference is "Literacy in a Digital World." We are delighted to announce that our keynote speaker will be Senator Joyce Fairbairn, Special Advisor on Literacy to the Minister of Human Resources Development Canada.

Senator Fairbairn will be joined by Dr. Greg Hollingshead, author and winner of the 1995 Governor General's Award for Fiction; Dr. Heather Blair, an associate professor in the department of Elementary Education at the University of Alberta, whose research focuses on the intersections of gender, culture, and literacy; and Dr. Stan Ruecker, an assistant professor of Humanities Computing at the University of Alberta, whose interests relate to computer-human interfaces and text visualization. Additionally, June Hughes, Volunteer Coordinator at the Centre for Family Literacy, and Kimberly Onclin, Program Manager at the Centre for Family Literacy, will be presenting their work with literacy advocacy.

This year's Professional Development Day will also include presentations from current and recently graduated library school students. Additionally, we will be hosting a luncheon at the event to encourage discussion among presenters, attendees, and students.

There is no charge for this event, and we encourage everyone to attend. Please RSVP to Merrill Kemp (mkemp@ualberta.ca) by February 1, 2005. If further information is required, please consult our web page (<http://www.ualberta.ca/~lissa1/pdday.htm>), which will be updated in January, or call the School of Library and Information Studies at (780) 492-4578.

We look forward to seeing you there!

*Sonya Betz
Second year MLIS student*



LISAA'S FALL SOCIAL SEASON A SUCCESS

LISAA hosted another successful **Champagne Brunch** as part of the 2004 Alumni Weekend at the University of Alberta campus. The event was held Saturday October 2nd on the 3rd floor at the School of Library and Information Studies. SLIS graduates old and new came to meet fellow grads, swap stories and enjoy brunch, complete with champagne and orange juice. This year's Champagne Brunch was particularly special, as SLIS celebrated its 35th year!

Our 2004 Distinguished Alumni Award recipient, Marnie Swanson, was not able to make the event, but will be honoured at a future date. All attendees were sure to raise a glass in Marnie's honour however!

The following month, LISAA once again put on a successful **Alumni Reception** during the Netspeed 2004 conference in Calgary. Members of the LISAA executive were on hand to keep the drinks flowing and food plentiful at the Glenmore Inn's Executive Suite. SLIS graduates came and went throughout the evening after a busy day of conferencing to relax and meet friends and fellow colleagues. Be sure to look out for the LISAA Alumni reception at Netspeed 2005 in Edmonton!



SLIS EMPLOYMENT SURVEY, CONT'D.

(Continued from page 1)

Of the 8 graduates in 2003 reporting full-time temporary placements at the time of the survey, contracts ranged from 3 months to one year in length, with possible renewal options in some cases; 4 of the 7 positions were one-year contracts.

Another indicator of employment trends is the number of graduates holding temporary rather than permanent positions. Just over half of the graduates in 2003 (14 out of 26 or 54%) were in one or more temporary positions at some point since graduation. While this was similar to 2002 graduates, it was in marked contrast to earlier years – 19% in 2001, 17% in 2000, and 32% in 1999. Among 2003 graduates reporting temporary positions since graduation, 4 had been in one such position, 6 had two each, 2 had three each, and 2 had four each. Among 2002 graduates, far fewer of those with temporary placements reported two or more such positions.

Current Placement Status	Number	Percentage
Full-time permanent	11	46%
Full-time temporary	8	33%
Part-time	5	21%
TOTAL	24	100%

Of the 5 graduates with part-time placements in 2003, 4 were permanent positions; 2 of them also held a second part-time position.

Salaries

Annual salaries reported by 11 graduates in 2003 with full-time permanent positions ranged from \$32,000 to \$62,000, with a median of \$43,900 and a mean of \$43,500. These figures reveal an average increase in remuneration of \$2,900 over the median salary reported the year before. Eight graduates in 2003 with full-time temporary positions reported median earnings of \$3,610 per month (mean \$3,470), a decrease of \$590 per month from 2002 median earnings.

Part-time positions paid between \$11.70 and \$23.78 per hour (averaging \$17.40). These rates appear to be static: part-time positions held by 2002 graduates paid between \$18.00 and \$23.00 per hour. The 2003 part-time placements ranged from 8 to 28 per week, averaging just under 21 hours per week.

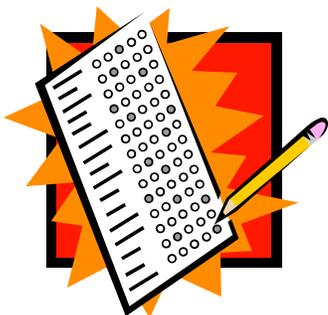
Employment Sector

Most frequent employers of 2003 graduates were post-secondary libraries (12 placements or 35%), followed by public and regional libraries (33%), special libraries including two government library placements (9%), and school libraries (6%). Single placements were reported in an academic archives, a publishing company, a management consulting company, a technology company, an international task force, and self-employed.

Placement Setting	Number	Percentage
Post-secondary libraries	12	35%
Public libraries	8	24%
Regional libraries	3	9%
Special libraries	3	9%
School libraries	2	6%
Other	6	17%
TOTAL	34	100%

Most frequent job titles and positions reported by 2003 graduates were librarian (7), public services librarian (4), and reference librarian (3). All others were mentioned once only: information services librarian, information specialist, business services librarian, children's programmer, outreach librarian, acquisitions librarian, serial librarian, project librarian, research librarian, automation services librarian, Web librarian, assistant regional director, library director, researcher, research assistant, curator, copy editor/indexer, library technical assistant, ILL/reference technician, and children's clerk.

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Primary job assignments were reference/information services (15), administration/management (3), web manager (3), collections (2), database management (2), interlibrary loans (2), marketing/outreach/public relations (2), youth and children's services (2), research (2), and one each in information literacy instruction, circulation, government documents, indexing/abstracting, systems/network manager, and school librarian. Three respondents indicated multiple task assignments (including one person who checked off eight categories).

Location

Edmonton continues to be the location of choice for graduates: 6 in 10 in 2003 and 2002, and 7 in 10 in 2001. Four of the 2003 placements were in Calgary. Generally speaking Alberta provided 82% of current locations for 2003 graduates, higher than the 60% for 2002 graduates. Other work locations reported by 2003 graduates were Saskatchewan (3) and Ontario (2). None of the responding graduates was working in the United States, unlike the previous four years when 18% on average went there to work.

Job Searching

Almost half of the 2003 graduates obtained their first position before graduation, and another 42% within 3 months. Only 12% took longer than 3 months to find a position. This pattern was similar to the year before, when 29% found their first position before graduation and another 59% within three months of graduation. However, 5 graduates in 2003 took more than 6 months to find the position they were holding at the time of the survey.



Position Obtained	First Position		Current Position*	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Before entering program	6	23%	---	---
Before graduation	6	23%	2	18%
Within 3 months of graduation	11	42%	2	18%
3 to 6 months after graduation	2	8%	2	18%
More than 6 months after graduation	1	4%	5	45%
TOTAL	26	100%	11	99%

*if different from first

One out of 5 graduates in 2003 found their positions through word-of-mouth (7 mentions), followed by the FLA jobline website (4), newspapers (4), the SLIS job board (3), and the JEROME-L listserv (3).

Source of Job Information	Number of Sources (1st & current positions)	Percentage
word-of-mouth	7	19%
FLA jobline website	4	11%
newspaper	4	11%
SLIS job board	3	8%
JEROME-L listserv	3	8%
listserv	3	8%
employer	2	5%
job posting	2	5%
other	9	24%
TOTAL	37	100%

Other sources of job information were unspecified listservs, employers, job postings, U of A Campus

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EMPLOYMENT SURVEY, CONT'D.

(Continued from page 5)

Recruiting, the EPL website, the Saskatchewan Library Association website, the Saskatchewan Library Association annual conference, the U of T FIS job website, and other unspecified sources – an internal posting, a library association website, a government bulletin, and a government ad. One graduate mentioned applying for a position and being offered a different one after their interview.

Library Work Experience and Demographics

As in previous years, most of the 2003 graduates gained library work experience either before or during their MLIS program (89%), with almost all working during the program even if they had prior experience. In the previous four years, work experience was reported by 82% in 2002, 86% in 2001, 97% in 2000, and 90% in 1999.

Library Work Experience*	Number	Percentage
Either before or during MLIS	25	89%
- before (15 out of 28 – 54%)		
- during (24 out of 28 – 86%)		
Neither	3	11%
TOTAL	28	100%

* excludes for-credit field placements and practicums

Also similar to previous years was the very high proportion of 2003 graduates who worked part-time during their MLIS program (86%): 88% in 2002, 86% in 2001, 94% in 2000, and 83% in 1999.

Of the 28 graduates represented in the survey, 23 were females and 5 were male, 82% and 18% respectively, very similar to the full class of 40 with 83% females. The average age for the graduating class of 2003 was 34 years at graduation, within the range of the last two decades, 29 to 34 years of age. Academic patterns for degrees earned prior to the MLIS for 2003 graduates represented in the survey were as follows: 19 held the BA, 3 the BSc, 2 the BEd, 1 the BFA, 1 the MA, 1 the MSc, and 1 with doctoral coursework completed. Top disciplines reported by students were 7 degrees in history (or art history) and an equal number in English literature (or Writing).

Future Prospects

An important employment indicator is graduates' satisfaction with their present situation. All survey respondents were asked about this, whether working or not.

More than half of the 2003 graduates said they were seeking more satisfactory employment (15 out of 28 or 54%). In contrast, only 29% of the 2002 graduates were still looking, and among 2001 and 2000 graduates it was 25% and 14% respectively. The current year's pattern harkens back to graduates in pre-2000 years, when 48% of 1999 graduates and 43% of 1998 graduates were still looking. Two of the 2003 graduates wanted temporary or part-time positions if full-time were not available, and one was looking for part-time work.

Preferences among 2003 graduates were varied across the four main sectors – academic, public, special, government, and school, with many mentioning more than one type. Those seeking full-time work indicated annual salary goals ranging from \$35,000 to \$50,000+, averaging out at a median of \$40,000 per year. Part-time hourly earnings indicated were \$18 to \$20.

Thanks to all who responded to the annual survey and trusted us with personal data, particularly salary and wage information, for this aggregate analysis that preserves individual privacy.

*Alvin M. Schrader
November 2004*

“An important employment indicator is graduates’ satisfaction with their present situation.... More than half of the 2003 graduates said they were seeking more satisfactory employment (15 out of 28 or 54%).”

ALUMNI NEWS & NOTES

Katherine “Kate” MacInnes, MLIS 1999, writes: “After graduation, I decided to move back east and in June of 1999, I began a job at CBC Television in Halifax. I never really saw myself in a traditional library setting, so this was exactly the kind of thing I wanted. I catalogued videotape and worked on some special projects, watching hours of amazing footage of world and local events unfolding around me. One short-term contract became another, and another, and another - you know how that is! - but finally I decided I needed another change.

“In October 2000 I said goodbye to friends and family in Halifax, and headed to London to look for work. Before too long, I got a job working at Consult Hyperion as a “Knowledge Officer” and then moved into a more research-based role as a “Strategy Analyst.” Besides having a scary sounding job title and nifty business card, the roles also offered many challenges, including setting up a company-wide knowledge base, and researching entirely new (to me anyway!) fields such as biometrics, mobile phone payments, and the wide world of credit card security.

“For the last 10 months, I have been working as an “International Market Research Executive” for Jane’s Information Group, who are perhaps best known for *Jane’s Fighting Ships*. Their portfolio is actually much larger, as the company is a provider of intelligence on national and international defence, security, and risk developments, as well as of aerospace and transport information. The best thing about working at Jane’s is the opportunity for travel - in the past year, research into our markets has taken us around the world, to places as diverse as Singapore, Australia, Germany, Norway, Spain, and of course, Canada and the US! It has also been interesting to see what impact our research has on the company, from the release of new titles to fill niche markets to changes in our current offerings. It’s also great to get to meet with customers in a wide range of companies and job roles.

“I usually make it back to Canada once a year, and still miss it, not the least of which for its comparatively cheap housing and food! Still, it is amazing that here, I can travel to other countries so quickly and easily - I’ve been lucky enough to vacation in Wales, France, and Italy during my time here. I’ve enjoyed my time in England - I’ve made some good friends, had invaluable work experiences, and started rock climbing (!) - but don’t know how long I will stay. In any case, for my next big move, I am setting my sights on something less rainy and crowded than England...Spain? Portugal? Greece? Who knows? Maybe even Edmonton...”

Nicolle Lemay, Class of 1999 and LISAA’s very own Communications Officer, made her Edmonton theatre debut this past November in the Walterdale Playhouse production of Thornton Wilder’s *Our Town*. Nicolle gave a strong performance in the role of Mrs. Myrtle Webb in the play, which ran from November 24 to December 4, 2004.

It was while living in Lloydminster and working at Lakeland College back in 2002 that Nicolle first auditioned for a play on a dare from a friend. The rest, as they say, is history. Nicolle landed roles in the first two plays for which she auditioned, and got to perform in Lloydminster’s brand new Vic Juba Community Theatre, a state of the art facility that seats over 550 people. She followed that up with two more acting roles, a drama and a comedy, and also stage managed a children’s musical.

Nicolle describes being involved in community theatre as follows: “Being involved in community theatre is fantastic; I’ve met wonderful people, laughed so hard I cried (and vice versa!), and most of all, learned not to take myself too seriously! It’s amazing to imagine the number of volunteer hours that go into a production, but the energy, support and camaraderie of the creative process make it very worthwhile.”

Edmonton residents can catch Nicolle in an upcoming benefit production of *The Vagina Monologues* at the end of February. She also has plans to take an acting class. After that, who knows? Stratford? New York? London? Not bad for someone described in the program for *Our Town* as a “demure reference librarian.”



Kate in Nova Scotia



Nicolle in costume as Mrs. Myrtle Webb with co-star James Hees as Mr. Charles Webb.

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ALUMNI NEWS & NOTES

(Continued from page 7)

Marlice Schmidt, class of 1993, has taken a one-year leave of absence from her position as Internet/Technical Services Librarian at Alberta Justice, Provincial Court Libraries in Edmonton, to take on the position of Technical Services Librarian at the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague, The Netherlands.

The ICC is a relatively new body, established to prosecute individuals for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes committed after July 1, 2002. It is a permanent court and independent of the United Nations.

The library at the ICC is just getting underway, and Marlice has been involved in setting up an interim library automation system, working on the RFP for a permanent automation system, writing basic policies and procedures on how to catalogue and process books for support staff to follow ("...standardization has been a problem with so many temporary and short-term contract staff without library training"), and tackling a cataloguing backlog of several hundred volumes. She describes her work as "extraordinarily busy...as one would expect if you were setting up a library from scratch with a limited number of people."

The ICC is located in temporary quarters, and a permanent home will not be ready until 2009. As the library collection is built ("...we are purchasing at a dizzying pace..."), they are rapidly running out of space. "...We have had to move shelves and offices 4 times since I arrived because we continually keep running out of space! We continue to have floor weight-load issues....As far as staff go, we are packed tighter than sardines in a tin...."

Understandably, security at the ICC is very tight. In order to get to her office every day, Marlice must pass through a metal detector; put her bag or briefcase through an x-ray machine; show an ID badge ("they confirm the expiry date every day"); scan herself through secured glass turnstile doors; and then swipe her badge through three additional security doors. As well, any beverages get opened and checked ("...every morning security opens and looks at my coffee!").

Despite these challenges, Marlice writes: "In general, I absolutely love my job. The people are enthusiastic, outgoing and generally very nice."

Marlice has been in The Hague since March, and appears to have settled well into the life of this Dutch city of 463,000 people. She is staying in a third-floor flat, complete with a lovely pink sun-room ("...what people here refer to as the 'Winter Garden'"), located in the central area of The Hague. It is "...close to cafés, bistros, boutiques...very much like a Whyte Ave type of area, only 10 times bigger and slightly more upscale." Marlice has purchased two bikes since her arrival. As she says, "...cycling truly is a Dutch way of life."

Marlice maintains that "things are not really as exciting as you might think, although there have, in fact, been certain special moments (meeting Archbishop Desmond Tutu was one!)." As well, she has attended an interagency disco beach party; Canada Day celebrations at the residence of the Canadian Ambassador ("now THAT was a great party!"); and a Halloween party held in the catacombs of a former cathedral in Amsterdam. Travel opportunities have included a two week holiday touring The Netherlands with friends from Canada; weekend trips to Antwerp, Belgium; Padova and Venice in Italy; Braunschweig and Hamburg in Germany; and frequent jaunts to Amsterdam, which is only 45 minutes away.

Marlice will be returning to Canada in March, 2005.



Marlice (right), at the ICC with head librarian Elizabeth (centre) and library assistant Anna.

Judy-Lynn Downey